

THE ADVISOR

A Publication of the Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board

Winter 1997

Evaluation of Environmental Monitoring Systems at Rocky Flats is Complete

The Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) is pleased to announce the successful completion of an independent evaluation of the environmental monitoring systems at and around the Rocky Flats Environmental Technology Site. This past March, CAB hired an independent contractor, Parker-Hall from Boise, Idaho, to perform the evaluation. Parker-Hall, headed by company president and lead

investigator, Dorothy Hall, spent the past nine months gathering information, interviewing key project managers, inspecting monitoring locations and equipment, and analyzing written plans and reports. With conclusion of the evaluation, Parker-Hall has prepared a written summary of the monitoring systems, performed a critical analysis, and developed a set of recommendations for improvements.

CAB became interested in pursuing the evaluation after reviewing the results of the Community Needs Assessment for the neighborhoods surrounding Rocky Flats. This needs assessment was conducted by the Jefferson County Department of Health and Environment and the University of Colorado School of Nursing, with assistance from CAB. One of the key themes expressed in the needs assessment was that residents were concerned about the environmental monitoring systems, and whether these systems were adequate to provide for protection of public health and the environment. CAB saw a need to bring in an outside expert to evaluate the monitoring systems and develop written descriptive summaries and recommendations for improvement. CAB project managers for the evaluation were Health Issues Focus Area Chair, Beverly Lyne, and Ken Korkia, the Board/Staff Coordinator.

The process for conducting the evaluation was divided into three tasks. Parker-Hall began by compiling information about the monitoring systems, next performed a critical analysis, and concluded by developing a set of recommendations for improvement. During the evaluation, six separate programs or media were examined, including air, surface water, groundwater, ecological, soils and sediments, and project-specific. The comprehensive evaluation looked at all entities conducting monitoring such as the contractors at Rocky Flats, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, and the local municipalities of Broomfield and Westminster.

Please turn to Pages 4 and 5 for more on this study.



Because of Rocky Flats' proximity to Standley Lake (pictured above) and other surrounding neighborhoods, monitoring of the environment is important to ensuring community safety.

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Rocky Flats Updates



2006 Plan Comments

The Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board has been closely monitoring the development of the Department of Energy's "2006 Plan" for the cleanup of the Rocky Flats Environmental Technology Site. At its September 4 meeting, CAB approved a collection of comments and recommendations on the plan. CAB recommended that DOE:

- Provide greater detail on the end-state proposed for Rocky Flats.
- Pursue a technology program that seeks not only faster and cheaper cleanup, but one that is focused on working toward a cost-effective cleanup to background levels.
- Clarify the decision-making process following the end of the public comment period.
- Organize a stakeholder process to address the issue of accelerated cleanup on a national level.
- Include more information on DOE's conception of and plans for the National Dialogue on Waste and Materials Disposition.
- Proceed cautiously in making out-year decisions until the plan has been commented on and finalized.
- Combine stakeholder involvement processes for budgeting and planning activities to allow more efficient and effective public involvement.

- Identify areas where stakeholder comments have been incorporated into the plan.
- Develop a well-conceived and readily-implementable contingency for each of the key assumptions of the plan.
- Provide greater details regarding productivity improvements mentioned in the plan.
- Seek annual reviews of the productivity goals and performance from an outside, independent agency.
- Include an analysis of the impacts that a change in oversight (i.e. NRC oversight) might have for the DOE cleanup programs.
- Understand that reduction in risk and full compliance with regulatory agreements should be the top priorities, over reduction in mortgage costs and achieving cost savings.

These comments and recommendations, along with several others, were forwarded to DOE-Headquarters. CAB received a response stating that comments will be addressed in the next revision of the plan in February 1998. CAB's D&D / Closure Plan Focus Group, which meets on the third Monday of the month, will be reviewing the new document.

Rocky Flats Budget

In May 1996, Rocky Flats submitted a budget request of \$640 million for Fiscal Year (FY) 1998. The site's preferred case in the most recent version of the 2006 plan, Case 5A, calls for an annual budget of \$694 million. Based on what Congress has approved for the Department of Energy, the site is currently anticipating it will receive approximately \$671 million in FY98.

CAB's Site Wide Issues / Budget Focus Group will continue to track this and other RFETS budget issues (see story on next page). Call the CAB office if you would like to join this effort - we are always looking for volunteers.

Flats Chosen as Pilot Closure Site

In August 1997, Secretary of Energy Federico Peña announced the designation of Rocky Flats as the first, large Accelerated Closure Pilot Site. The Fernald and Mound sites in Ohio are also part of this program. Under this pilot program, Rocky Flats will receive its funds from a special Accelerated Closure account and will no longer be competing with other DOE sites for funding. Peña stated that, "Rocky Flats deserves to be singled out as an Accelerated Closure Pilot because of the precedent-setting efforts that have been made here in performance-based contracting and regulatory reinvention." To ensure the success of this program, Peña committed to pursuing stable funding and the availability of sites to accept Rocky Flats' wastes. DOE has set a goal of completing cleanup at Rocky Flats by 2006 and at a cost of \$7 billion. DOE hopes to be able to use lessons learned here to help other sites achieve accelerated cleanup.

RFETS FY97 Accomplishments

- We had planned to report on the final results of the Fiscal Year 1997 Rocky Flats Cleanup Agreement Milestones and Kaiser-Hill Performance Measures. However, the validation of these activities has not been completed as of the printing of this issue. Please look for an article in the next issue of *The Advisor*.

CAB Reorganizes Around Issues for 1998

Each year, the Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) develops a work plan to help guide its planning and budgeting, and to document the issues or activities it views as most important to address for the year. During the summer of 1997, CAB undertook a survey of its members, members of its committees, the Department of Energy (DOE), the regulators and the public in order to identify issues for its 1998 Work Plan.

Through this process, the Board identified several topical Focus Areas. Work throughout the year will be organized around these issues. Replacing CAB's usual standing committee structure, five Focus Groups have been formed to address each of the subject areas. They include:

- Closure Plan
- Deactivation and Decommissioning
- Health Issues
- Plutonium Issues
- Site Wide Issues / Budget

(See box to the right for a list of issues each Focus Group will address in 1998.)

CAB Focus Group participants include Board members and other members of the public. Each group is responsible for studying issues, arranging appropriate presentations, conducting any necessary research, and then developing recommendations which are presented to the full Board for approval. The work plan includes a statement of the work activity for each issue and a timeframe for completion. The 1998 Work Plan also lists the activities for CAB administrative committees, outreach activities, and issues which CAB staff will track and then develop periodic updates for the membership.

CAB publishes an annual report at the end of each year, which presents a summary of its recommendations and other accomplishments. Annual reports from the last two years are currently available at the CAB office. If you would like to become involved with any of the 1998 Focus Groups, or to obtain a copy of the work plan, please call the CAB office at (303) 420-7855.

1998 CAB

Focus Group Activities

Closure Plan Focus Group

- Industrial Area Reuse Plans
- Comprehensive Land Use Plan
- Independent Review and Annual Review of Soil Action Levels
- Natural Resources - Buffer Zone Management
- 2006 Plan

Deactivation and Decommissioning Focus Group

- Decommissioning Program Plan (DPP)
- Building Standards Document
- Decommissioning Operations Plan (DOP)
- Disposal of Building Rubble

Health Issues Focus Group

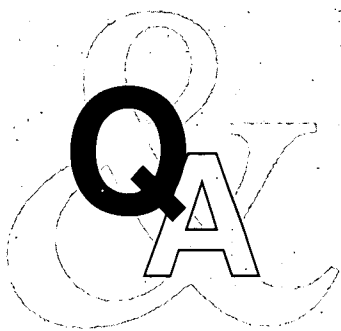
- Emergency Planning Zone for Rocky Flats
- Rocky Flats Historical Public Exposures Studies / Follow On Epidemiological Studies
- Environmental Monitoring - Follow-up to Independent Contractor Review
- Ecosystem / Prebles Meadow Jumping Mouse
- Community Needs Assessment Outcomes

Plutonium Issues Focus Group

- Residues Environmental Impact Statement
- Storage and Disposition of Surplus Weapons-Usable Plutonium PEIS

Site Wide Issues / Budget Focus Group

- Rocky Flats Budget
- RFCA Milestones / Annual Review
- Contract Performance Issues
- Worker Health and Safety Issues



We would like to answer your questions about Rocky Flats in our next newsletter. If anything you read in this issue brought up questions for you, or you have been wondering about anything related to Rocky Flats, just ask us to find an answer for you. Please send, call in, fax or e-mail your questions to us by January 16 and we will try to answer them in our next issue.

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Independent Environmental Monitoring

As was described in our cover story, CAB hired Parker-Hall, Inc. to review the Rocky Flats environmental monitoring program. Parker-Hall provided CAB with comprehensive descriptions of each program, as well as several recommendations for improvements. The results are summarized below.

Description of Environmental Monitoring Programs

Air monitoring is an important concern for the community because of the rapid manner in which potential contaminants from Rocky Flats could travel into the neighboring community. Six major air programs are in operation, some conducted by site contractors and others by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE). These programs are used to identify and quantify air contaminants, evaluate emissions from specific sources, monitor air dispersion paths, monitor project-specific activities, and evaluate air quality impacts of site activities on existing air quality. Both radiological and non-radiological pollutants are analyzed. A special air monitoring program, Community Radiation Monitoring (COMRAD), uses air monitors placed within the community at locations in Arvada, Broomfield, Northglenn/Thornton and Westminster that record meteorological conditions and have detectors for plutonium and gamma radiation. These sites are managed by local school science teachers and funded by the Department of Energy.

Surface water monitoring also is an important concern of the community due to the close proximity of Rocky Flats upstream from municipal drinking water supplies. Monitoring of surface water is conducted by the site contractors, CDPHE, and the cities of Broomfield and Westminster. The monitoring conducted by the site and



Turnaround times involved in getting sample results from laboratories was noted in this study as an area that could be improved.

CDPHE focuses on making sure that the water which leaves the site is in compliance with state water quality standards. The cities perform analyses of the quality of water in and around Standley Lake and Great Western Reservoir, as well as at the water treatment plants. Analyses conducted by all entities include tests for radiological contaminants, numerous chemicals, and metals.

Groundwater monitoring is necessary because of several groundwater contamination plumes that exist onsite at Rocky Flats. The site contractors monitor groundwater by drilling wells in strategic locations to monitor the contamination plumes. Additional wells are located in surface water drainage locations and along the site's eastern boundary. Water drawn from the total population of 282 wells is tested for radioactive materials, chemicals, and metals. Currently, there are no groundwater monitoring locations beyond the Rocky Flats site boundary.

During its evaluation, Parker-Hall was surprised to learn that there is no routine **soil or sediment monitoring** program in place at Rocky Flats. Studies have been conducted in the past to look at soils and sediments, but the

last routine program ended in 1994.

There are soil and sediment samples taken today, but only for limited purposes, such as characterization of a specific remediation site or to look for the source of water contamination exceedances.

Ecological monitoring focuses primarily on protecting endangered plant or animal species and to detect changes in populations of plants and animals that can be found at the site. There are no regular programs to detect contaminant uptake and transport within the ecosystem.

In determining the scope of the environmental monitoring systems evaluation, CAB wanted to look at both site-wide and project-specific monitoring programs. **Project-specific monitoring** must be tailored to match a particular project or task, such as the cleanup of a contaminated burial site or the decontamination, decommissioning and demolition of buildings. Therefore, Parker-Hall was asked to look at the site's program for environmental monitoring during these activities. What they discovered was a fragmented program not well integrated with the overall site-wide monitoring activities.

Review Identifies Areas for Improvement

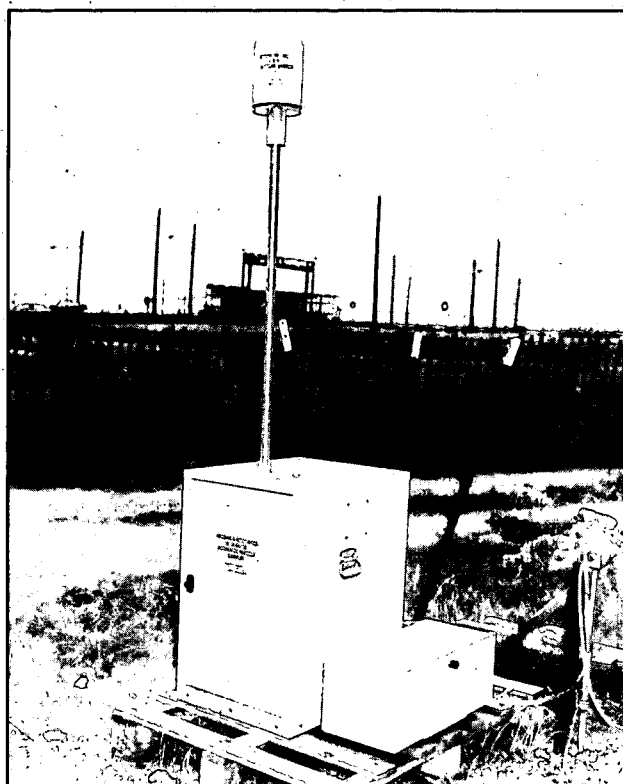
Recommendations

At a presentation to the Citizens Advisory Board on October 9, representatives from Parker-Hall gave their analysis of the monitoring systems and provided CAB with a set of recommendations for improvements. Overall, Parker-Hall reported that the monitoring systems in place at Rocky Flats meet the regulatory requirements, but do not go much beyond what is required. They see a need to integrate the various programs better, and also stated that there needs to be improvement in the presentation of monitoring results to the community.

Some specific recommendations include the need to expand the list of contaminants that the site tests for in its analyses and to increase the sampling frequency, particularly in the ground and surface water programs. Parker-Hall has noted several locations where new groundwater and surface water monitoring stations should be installed. A critical recommendation is the need to speed up the time it takes to get monitoring results back from the laboratory. This need is particularly acute for the surface water program, where currently it can take from four to six weeks to receive analytical results.

For the ecological program, Parker-Hall recommends additional sampling of vegetation and lower forms of animals, both terrestrial and aquatic, to determine concentrations of contamination in the organisms and evaluate the potential for contaminant bioaccumulation. They also recommend that the data collection area be expanded, especially in relatively undisturbed and uncontaminated areas north and west of the main industrial areas of the site in order to establish a baseline for comparison with more contaminated areas.

Because no routine soil and sediment sampling programs exist at Rocky Flats, Parker-Hall recommends that such programs be implemented. These activities are necessary for tracking the



Some of the air monitoring equipment in use at Rocky Flats.

movement of contaminants from the soil into the surface water systems which could allow for contamination to travel beyond the site's boundaries.

Generally, Parker-Hall had few specific recommendations for changes or improvements to the air monitoring programs, with the exception of the need to explore means of communicating the information better with the public. They were highly supportive of the Community Radiation Monitoring Program (COMRAD), but suggested the installation of some additional equipment that would provide more information on the length or duration of exposure should there ever be a major release from the site.

Next Steps

CAB will use the recommendations provided by Parker-Hall to begin a dialogue with the site contractors, the regulators, local municipalities, and

interested community members on ways to improve the environmental monitoring systems at Rocky Flats. As part of its contract with CAB, Parker-Hall has produced a document entitled, *A Citizens Guide to Environmental Monitoring Systems at Rocky Flats*. This guide is written in easily understandable language and is meant to familiarize community members with the environmental monitoring systems in place at Rocky Flats. CAB will be distributing this valuable reference source to local libraries and schools, as well as to any interested members of the public.

Copies of Parker-Hall's technical evaluation and the *Citizens Guide* are available in electronic format and can be obtained by accessing CAB's website at <http://www.indra.com/rfcab/>. You can also obtain a written copy of the *Citizens Guide* by contacting the CAB office at (303) 420-7855.

Site-Specific Advisory Boards A R O U N D THE DOE WEAPONS COMPLEX

This Issue: Fernald Citizens Advisory Board

The Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board is one of several Site-Specific Advisory Boards (SSABs) that have been formed at former nuclear weapons production sites. In each issue of The Advisor, we spotlight the activities of one of these boards.

Fernald Citizens Advisory Board and the Accelerated Cleanup Plan

The Fernald Citizens Advisory Board and the Department of Energy Ohio Field Office have both had long-standing commitments to an accelerated cleanup of the Fernald Environmental Management Project (FEMP) which pre-date the 2006 Report by DOE-Headquarters. In 1995, the Fernald Citizens Advisory Board released several recommendations for cleanup of the site. Among these was a recommendation for cleanup to occur in approximately 10 years, as opposed to the 25 years originally planned.

That same year, DOE's Ohio Field Office released its "Vision 2005," which proposed that site cleanup would occur in 10 years. This plan also called for lowering costs by increasing efficiency. Currently, the completion of the FEMP cleanup is scheduled for FY2008, but the Ohio Field Office and the Fernald Citizens Advisory Board are hopeful that the 2005 schedule can still be achieved. One delay from this schedule has come from the remediation of the waste storage silos in Operable Unit 4. The remediation has been extended because of technology problems.



The Fernald site in October 1997. Construction of the onsite disposal facility can be seen in the upper right corner of the site.

Recently, the Fernald Citizens Advisory Board has created a new committee whose purpose is to examine efficiency issues, including the monitoring of costs and schedules for site activities. This Efficiency Committee has recommended that the priorities and costs of many non-remediation projects within the Ohio Field Office and the FEMP be re-evaluated.

The Fernald Citizens Advisory Board has also expressed concern to DOE-Headquarters that inaction on its part may extend the schedule for completion at Fernald. Both the Fernald Citizens Advisory Board and the Ohio Field Office will continue to monitor activities at the site to ensure a timely and efficient cleanup.

Looking for More Information? Want to Share Your Opinions? Here's How.....



**Web Site or
E-Mail**

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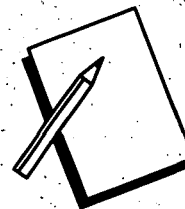
Visit us on the Internet to access CAB recommendations, Board meeting minutes, newsletter articles, Rocky Flats frequently-asked-questions and more. You can also send us e-mail.



**Public
Comment
Message
Line**

(303) 637-4808

Call 24 hours a day to record your opinions, comments, or suggestions on Rocky Flats issues or CAB activities. All comments will be reviewed by the Board on a regular basis.



**Letters to
the Editor /
Q&A**

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Send us a letter expressing your opinion on a Rocky Flats issue and we will print as many as possible in each issue. Also, see the box on Page 3 to find out how to submit questions that we will answer in future newsletters.

The Advisor is published quarterly by the Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board (CAB). The Executive Editor is Tom Marshall. Please send your questions, suggestions and ideas to:

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Except as noted, all articles are written by CAB staff: Ken Korkia, Chris Millsaps, Erin Rogers and Deb Thompson. To request a change of address or to add or remove your name from the mailing list, contact Deb Thompson at the above address and phone number. Material may be reprinted if credit is given. CAB is funded under a 1997 grant of approximately \$237,000 sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy.

CAB MISSION STATEMENT

The Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board, a nonpartisan, broadly representative, independent advisory board with concerns related to Rocky Flats activities, is dedicated to providing informed recommendations and advice to the agencies (Department of Energy, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment and the Environmental Protection Agency), government entities and other interested parties on policy and technical issues and decisions related to cleanup, waste management and associated activities. The Board is dedicated to public involvement, awareness and education on Rocky Flats issues.

Rocky Flats Public Meeting Calendar

December

4	<i>Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board Meeting</i>	6 - 9:30 p.m.	Arvada Center
8	<i>CAB Site Wide Issues / Budget Focus Group</i>	7 - 8:30 p.m.	Westminster City Hall
9-10	<i>Health Advisory Panel Technical Work Sessions</i>	8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.	Sheraton Denver West Hotel
15	<i>CAB D&D / Closure Plan Focus Group</i>	6 - 8 p.m.	Westminster City Hall
16	<i>CAB Plutonium Issues Focus Group</i>	7 - 9 p.m.	Westminster City Hall

January

8	<i>Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board Meeting</i>	6 - 9:30 p.m.	Westminster City Hall
12	<i>CAB Site Wide Issues / Budget Focus Group</i>	7 - 8:30 p.m.	Westminster City Hall
19	<i>CAB D&D / Closure Plan Focus Group*</i>	6 - 8 p.m.	Westminster City Hall
20	<i>CAB Plutonium Issues Focus Group</i>	7 - 9 p.m.	Westminster City Hall

* meeting date may be changed

February

5	<i>Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board Meeting</i>	6 - 9:30 p.m.	Westminster City Hall
9	<i>CAB Site Wide Issues / Budget Focus Group</i>	7 - 8:30 p.m.	Westminster City Hall
16	<i>CAB D&D / Closure Plan Focus Group*</i>	6 - 8 p.m.	Westminster City Hall
17	<i>CAB Plutonium Issues Focus Group</i>	7 - 9 p.m.	Westminster City Hall

* meeting date may be changed

ALL MEETINGS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE, PLEASE CALL BEFORE YOU GO -- (303) 420-7855

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Sheraton Denver West Hotel: 360 Union Boulevard, Lakewood

Westminster City Hall: 4800 West 92nd Avenue, Westminster

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